



United States Department of Interior

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Lower Great Lakes Fishery Resources Office
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LOWER GREAT LAKES FISHERY RESOURCES OFFICE

MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT May 2002



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Volunteers

Mike Brenner, Angela Werth, April Scherer, Zach Dylong, Don Fedrico, Aaron Cushing, Amy Kron, Nick Nay, Ben Carson, Paul Kozacki, Paul and Peggy Scheuer, Nicki Barraclough

LAKE TROUT RESTORATION

Betsy, Dan and Mike W. conducted a study to assess lake trout mortality caused by stocking procedures (5/7-8). The project was conducted at the Lake Erie offshore stocking site.

Approximately 1250 lake trout yearlings were placed into a net pen and lowered to the bottom for 15 hours to mimic typical stocking procedures. Failure of the lake water pumping system during transport is believed to have affected the accuracy of the study causing unexpected yearling mortality.

GREAT LAKES BASIN ECOSYSTEM TEAM
Sandra and Chris submitted the proposal, *GLBET - Invasive Species Web Page*, to the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem Team (GLBET) for funding consideration through the Team's kitty fund.

Mike W. submitted the proposal, *Survey of Reference-Reach Stream Segments in Western New York Watersheds*, to the GLBET for funding consideration (5/15). The work would include hydrologic and biological assessments of undisturbed portions of western New York tributaries as reference streams on which downstream restoration efforts should be based.

Chris attended a meeting for the GIS/DSS Working Group in Ann Arbor, MI (5/15 - 17). The GLBET GIS Strategic Report draft was completed and preparations for a presentation at the upcoming GLBET meeting were begun.

Chris attended the GLBET meeting in Ithaca, NY (5/21-23). The meeting focused on the accomplishments and direction of the Lake Sturgeon Committee, GIS/DSS Working Group, and the Islands Committee. Chris and Rich Greenwood (Chicago, IL) gave a presentation summarizing the progress and the activities of the GIS/DSS Working Group. The GLBET granted full committee status to the GIS/DSS Working Group.

Chris was nominated for and accepted the GIS Committee Chair position.

LAKE ONTARIO

Mike W. participated in a conference call with representatives from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the Environmental Protection Agency to discuss the Rochester Embayment (Lake Ontario)

sediment contaminants assessment (5/31). The field sampling schedule and other logistical issues were addressed, including research vessel, equipment, and staffing needs.

Mike W. and Dan conducted a survey of the barrier beach/wetland interface portion of the Sterling Creek marsh at Fair Haven State Park, NY (5/2-4). In addition, 3 continuously-recording temperature monitors were installed at several locations throughout the wetland, and will be left in place until October, 2002. This work is part of a multi-agency study supported by the International Joint Commission to assess the effects of water level management on Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence River coastal marshes.

Mike W. installed water temperature monitors in several coastal wetlands along the eastern shore of Lake Ontario (NY)(5/22). Sites included Black Pond, Sandy Pond, and South Colwell Pond, adjacent to the Lakeview Wildlife Management Area.

INVASIVE SPECIES PROGRAM

Coordination

Sandra participated in the Northeast Regional Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species(ANS) meeting in Brattleboro, VT (5/7). Each of the three committees of the Panel met to identify and prioritize actions and funding needs. Sandra is a member of the Communications, Education, and Outreach Committee.

Sandra participated in the ANS Regional Coordinator meeting in Omaha, NE (5/22). Discussions focused on coordination efforts and needs within the Service, budget and funding allocations, National Invasive Species Management Plan implementation, and reauthorization of the National Invasive Species Act.

Sandra participated in a meeting hosted by the Washington Office in Arlington, VA to discuss the relevance of and need for Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) training for Service staff (5/29). National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) staff were present to define their potential role in advancing this type of training as a standard course available to all Service staff. Sandra is a member of the HACCP Workgroup.

Sandra participated in a conference call hosted by Pennsylvania Sea Grant to further develop plans to conduct HACCP training in the Northeast region (5/9). Staff from NCTC participated in the call to provide information about the facility as a possible location to host the training event.

Sandra participated in a conference call to discuss the proposal, *Non-Native Oysters in the Chesapeake Bay*, prepared by the National Academy of Sciences (5/2). Participants discussed and defined USFWS concerns with the proposal in terms of its adequacy to address management issues, as well as concerns raised by other federal agencies.

Erie Canal

Mike W., Jeff and Mike S. conducted fish, benthic invertebrate, plankton, and habitat surveys at several locations along the Erie Canal in New York (5/20-23). These sites included North Tonawanda, Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, Three Rivers Junction near Syracuse, and the Niagara River.

Mike W. conducted a site visit to the Old Erie Canal Museum in Chittenango, NY (5/21). The location was selected for an upcoming workshop "Educators and the Erie Canal", one of a series of three to be hosted by the LGLFRO and NY Sea Grant during July, 2002. These workshops are designed to provide science teachers and other educators with information and materials necessary to introduce their students to the topic of non-indigenous aquatic nuisance species.

Sandra submitted all required forms to the Regional Office External Affairs requesting approval to develop and print the brochure, *Erie Canal and Introduced Species*. Mike S. and Sandra prepared draft text and selected images to be included in the brochure.

Round Goby

Mike S. conducted surveys to assess the distribution of round goby in several tributaries along the south shore of Lake Erie in New York (5/28-30). Fish and habitat data were collected in Eighteenmile Creek, Big Sister Creek, Chautauqua Creek, Canadaway Creek, Walnut Creek and Silver Creek.

HABITAT EVALUATION/RESTORATION

Mike W. and Mike S. conducted a survey of the fish community in the nearshore areas of the Buffalo River at the Seneca Bluffs Wetland Restoration Site, Buffalo, NY (5/23). Fish and habitat data (water temperature and dissolved oxygen levels) were collected and will be used by the project's Technical Advisory Committee to develop in-stream aquatic habitat restoration activities.

FISH AND WILDLIFE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (FEDERAL LANDS) Fort Drum

Mike W. submitted two proposals to the Fort Drum Natural Resources Branch for funding consideration (5/21). The proposed work focuses on gathering information (field collections and surveys), developing recommendations, and enhancing fish communities of several lakes used by both military personnel and public anglers. Development of a multi-faceted outreach and education program emphasizing fishery-related issues, including fish identification and aquatic nuisance species prevention and control, was also proposed.

Mike W. met with Ray Rainbolt (DoD Staff Biologist) in Fort Drum, NY to discuss fishery management and habitat improvement projects (5/22). Water temperature monitors were placed in Remington Pond to assess the thermal habitat available for various fish species.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Mike W. and Mike S. participated in the Orleans County Field Days in Albion, NY (5/14-15). The display and presentations highlighted local aquatic nuisance species, featuring live aquatic organisms and sampling demonstrations. Approximately 700 school children participated in the event.

Mike W. wrote the paper, *Fish of the Niagara River*, for Jay Birney (environmental educator) (5/16). The article provided an overview of the unique aquatic ecosystem of the Niagara River, including a description of the fish species, other local fauna, and critical habitat types that are found in the river's corridor.

Mike W. gave a presentation to the environmental studies students at McKinley High School in Buffalo, NY (5/28). The presentation included an overview of the academic requirements and

experience necessary to enter and advance in fishery biology careers, followed by an overview of fish and aquatic animals of the Great Lakes basin.

The LGLFRO welcomed two new summer interns, April Scherer and Angela Werth. Both are enrolled in the Environmental Studies Program at the University of Buffalo.

STAFF TRAINING

Chris attended the New Employee Training held in the Regional Office, Hadley, MA (5/7-10).

Chris attended the Fishery Information System (FIS) training at the National Conservation Training Center, Shepherdstown, WV (5/28-5/31). The FIS is a database used to track the Fisheries Operating Needs, Imperiled Species, Fish and Egg Distribution, and the Maintenance Management of fisheries offices within the USFWS.

OTHER

Betsy attended a meeting of the Partners for Urban Resources and Environment Steering Committee (5/16). The group reviewed the status of ongoing community projects, the Urban Forestry Ecosystem Restoration grant project, and other related activities.

This monthly report provides a brief, in-house report on recent activities, issues or events of the Lower Great Lakes Office. Its contents should not be used or cited elsewhere in any way without first contacting our staff. This is to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the information.